



**IOWA CAUCUSES:
TOP ISSUES
FACING BUSINESS**

STEVE DUST
*President and CEO
Greater Cedar Valley Alliance & Chamber*



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Business and Industry

Iowa Association of Business and Industry. "The Voice of Iowa Business since 1903" is the largest business network in the state (serving as Iowa's state chamber) with a long legacy of advocating for a competitive business climate in Iowa. ABI offers its nearly 1,500 member companies and their employees opportunities to network, learn best practices in lean processes, workforce, workers' compensation, controlling health care costs, employee drug testing, environmental issues and leadership. ABI works "to foster a favorable business, economic, governmental and social climate within the State of Iowa so that our citizens have the opportunity to enjoy the highest possible quality of life."

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A VIEW FROM THE TOP



Paul Gregoire

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Use the Iowa Caucus Toolkit to help prepare for Feb. 1

In last month's edition of Business Record Iowa, I noted that successful companies are always looking ahead, and that November's election is something to which we should all look ahead. This edition of ABI's monthly journal is about something that is just as important as looking ahead. That is action.

At Emerson/Fisher, the global leader in industrial control and isolation valves, we plan and then put our plans into action. As it relates to the election this fall, all Iowans will soon have the opportunity to take action. Iowa's first-in-the-nation presidential caucuses take place Feb. 1, and this edition of Business Record Iowa is all about the caucuses.

I urge you and your employees to participate in the caucuses and to back the presidential candidate of your/their choice. One great resource for objective, nonpartisan information about the candidates is found at iavotes.com. This award-winning website is home to ABI's voter resources, including the Iowa Caucus Toolkit.

At www.iavotes.com, you'll find instruc-

tions on how to participate in the caucuses, candidate videos and a breakdown of where candidates stand on specific issues. You can also find information about your elected officials at the state level. After visiting www.iavotes.com, you will go to your caucus better-informed and better-prepared.

And read this edition of Business Record Iowa for more caucus information. Again, most importantly, I hope you participate. Informed, thoughtful participation, no matter who is your candidate of choice, is what the caucuses are all about.

By the way, don't forget to go to www.iowaabi.org today and register for the 2016 ABI Legislative Briefing and Reception. The event will take place in Des Moines Jan. 13, and you don't want to miss it!

Finally, every month, when the question is asked about who will lead the way in making Iowa an even better place to live and do business, "Why Not ABI?" Thank you for your support.

EXPERT ADVICE

Data risk: Are you insuring what you should? Are you sure?

Companies have insurance for all kinds of liability, from fires to workers' compensation, but what about a data breach?

The average policy does not include coverage for data risk or cyber liability. Fires cost U.S. businesses \$3 billion in 2014, while data breaches cost over \$40 billion (more than 10 times as much as fires). Over 78 percent of small to medium-sized businesses experienced a cyberattack in 2014. Are you a member of lucky 22 percent?

Consider this: Half of all attacks are targeted at business with fewer than 500 employees.

The cost for small businesses can be enormous. More than 95 percent of all businesses have insurance for fire, but fewer than 40 percent have cyber/data breach insurance.

Here are two coverage options to consider:

1st Party Coverage: This includes forensic investigation, notification expense, credit monitoring expense and crisis management, including public relations consultants.

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Juli Jenkins

LMC Insurance & Risk
Management

Juli.jenkins@lmcins.com



EVENT REWIND

Connecting Statewide Leaders

WAVERLY | DEC. 10



Top: Teri Trask, Orange Elementary Principal and a member of the Leader Valley Leader-in-Me task discusses the Leader Valley initiative. Top right: panelists included from left, Tom Penaluna of CBE Companies and Leader Valley, Michele Farrell of Elevate Advanced Manufacturing, Adriana Johnson of Rockwell Collins, Steve Dust of the Greater Cedar Valley Chamber & Alliance and Teri Trask. Right: Audience members listen as panelists discuss business and education partnerships.



The December Connecting Statewide Leaders forum focused on how businesses and educational institutions can work together to better prepare students for the workforce, with both soft and technical skills.

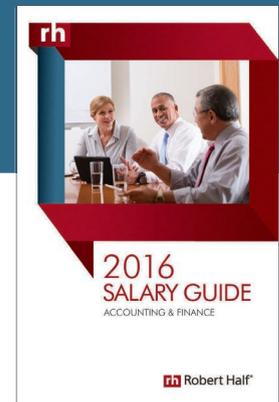


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AHEAD OF THE CURVE



The 2015-16 Leadership Iowa Class learned about all levels of education during their December session in Waverly. The session included a tour of United Equipment Accessories and Waverly-Shell Rock Middle School.



The LI class learned about the state of higher education in Iowa from leaders of several local institutions of higher ed, during their recent session in Waverly.



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STEVE DUST
*President and CEO
Greater Cedar Valley
Alliance & Chamber*

IOWA CAUCUSES: TOP ISSUES FACING BUSINESS

As Iowans prepare to caucus next month, business leaders throughout the state are working to keep business issues front of mind.

“Issues important to business and the economy affect every Iowan, but oftentimes they don’t think of it that way,” said Nicole Crain, senior vice president for public policy of the Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI).

ABI is one of several organizations throughout the state working to educate voters and encourage employees to participate in the Iowa caucuses on Feb. 1.

“Iowans have a unique opportunity to talk with candidates about the issues that matter most and to help drive the national conversation,” Crain said. “The more people we can engage in that process, the better.”

ABI, in partnership with the Business and Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC), created the Iowa Caucus Toolkit to help voters better understand how the caucuses work. The nonpartisan online resource, which is available at caucus.iavotes.com, provides step-by-step videos explaining the caucus process and information on how to talk with employees about getting involved.

The organization has also put together a presidential candidate video series in which candidates answer the same four questions on issues important to Iowa’s business community. Those videos and other information on where candidates stand on a whole host of topics allow voters to make side-by-side comparisons of those running to be president.

Among the issues most important to ABI members: workforce, national debt, regulation and health care.

“There’s a lot of information out there, but to really make it personal, to bring it home to our economic area, it’s important for employers to put the facts out there about an issue, whatever that issue is,” said Steve Dust, president and CEO of the Greater Cedar Valley Alliance and Chamber, who has been using the Iowa Caucus Toolkit as part of his get-out-the-vote efforts in northeast Iowa.

Throughout the past several months, Iowans have been bombarded with issue campaigns as individuals and organizations try to make their concerns a top priority for voters and candidates alike.

“Even though only one person will be elected president, all of those candidates are going to go somewhere,” said Tim Coonan, director of government relations for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. “They will receive a Cabinet position or play another important role in the future. The message is not lost on them even if they don’t win.”

Coonan’s organization has been emphasizing the need to create a plan for affordable, reliable electricity.

ON CAUCUS NIGHT, STICK AROUND AFTER THE PRESIDENTIAL VOTE

Selecting a presidential candidate is the most highly anticipated activity on caucus night, but there are other important party activities voters should take part in.

Those who leave after a candidate is selected miss out on the opportunity to help establish their party's platform, which is a representation of issues important to the party.

Caucus participants can bring their own resolutions for consideration. Below are three resolutions on issues important to the business community.

Bring these resolutions with you on caucus night and help advocate for issues important to Iowa businesses and employees.

1 We believe a growing and prepared talent pipeline is needed to support business growth and expand Iowa's economy. We support continued investment in existing programs and public-private partnerships, such as Elevate Advanced Manufacturing, that educate and expose young Iowans to multiple career opportunities.

2 We support a simple, fair and more competitive tax code and regulatory system that fosters rather than inhibits innovation.

3 We believe that as the health care law is put in place, it should remain flexible for employees and employers and focus on providing affordable, quality care.

The cost of electricity is important for businesses, especially when it comes to deciding where to locate, he said.

Members of the electric cooperative association, which includes 650,000 consumers, have been attending events throughout the state and talking with candidates about the importance of reliable, affordable electricity.

Regulation is another important issue for industries from manufacturing to banking.

"It's probably our top issue," said Sharon Presnall, senior vice president of government relations and compliance for the Iowa Bankers Association.

"We've been highlighting a lot with candidates that there is a regulatory aspect that has been difficult for smaller community banks to manage, and it's been confusing for consumers as well," she said.

Providing an opportunity for business leaders and owners to speak with candidates directly is also important, said Kristin Failor, Iowa state director for the National Federation of Independent Business.

"I think especially in a small business environment, if they don't say anything, no one will," Failor said. "They are the ones who can provide those firsthand, real-life experiences to our elected officials and candidates."

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THREE WAYS TO ENGAGE YOUR EMPLOYEES IN THREE WEEKS

The Iowa caucuses are three weeks away, which is plenty of time to launch a get-out-the-vote effort with your employees. Research shows that employees trust their employer more than any other source when it comes to political and public policy information.

Here are three ways you can engage your employees in the caucus process:

1

Share information on the candidates. There are so many candidates, and voters can feel overwhelmed. Help ease voter anxiety by providing unbiased, nonpartisan information on where candidates stand on issues important to your company. You can find helpful side-by-side comparisons on the IAVotes website: www.iavotes.com.

2

Activate your employee base by tracking down the candidates and sharing information on local events. All politics are local, and in Iowa during the caucus season, all candidates are, too. Find out when all candidates, regardless of party, will be in your region and share the information with your employees so they can hear from and ask questions of the presidential hopefuls.

3

Explain caucus night procedure and participation options. The caucus process itself can be hard to understand. With delegates, conventions, straw polls and differing implementation depending on party, it's hard to keep up with what actually occurs on caucus night. We've done the research for you on caucus.iavotes.com. Drive employees to the website for all they need to know about how the caucuses work.

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CAPITOL BUSINESS

THE YEAR AHEAD IN
PUBLIC POLICY



Nicole Crain, Senior Vice President, Public Policy, ABI, ncrain@iowaabi.org

The Iowa Legislature convenes Monday, which will officially kick off a busy political year for all Iowans, and especially for the Iowa Association of Business and Industry (ABI).

As you develop your New Year's resolutions, we have a few we'd like you to consider. Each year provides new beginnings, and 2016 is an opportunity for ABI members to build upon the great work accomplished in the first half of the decade. Here are five ways for you to be involved with ABI's public policy efforts:



Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad, center, with ABI Past Chairman Mark Hanawalt, left, and ABI President Mike Ralston after signing an Iowa Business Day Declaration during Iowa Business Day on the Hill in 2015.

1. Attend the Legislative Reception and Day on the Hill

The annual legislative briefing and reception draws more than 400 members to an evening of networking with legislative and business leaders. This year, the event will take place at the Embassy Suites hotel in Des Moines on Wednesday, Jan. 13, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. If you would like to attend, please call 515-280-8000.

The next major policy event will be on March 15 in Des Moines. ABI will again partner with the Iowa chapter of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) to host Iowa Business Day on the Hill. The day will include a policy update and guest speakers, followed by a political lunch. Visit www.iowaabi.org to register.

2. Caucus for your candidate on Feb. 1

The Iowa caucuses are just three weeks away. To cut down on delays on caucus night, make sure you are registered to vote as a Democrat or Republican before attending. You may register that night, so don't let that discourage you. Remember, ABI has all the resources you need to have a successful caucus experience: caucus.iavotes.com.

3. Attend a legislative coffee

Meet your local legislators when they are back in the district on the weekend. Legislators want to hear from you. They see lobbyists all week in Des Moines and want to visit with constituents back home. Attending a local coffee or meeting with them at your office is a great way to build relationships with your legislators.

4. Sign up for a public policy committee

Interested in becoming more involved with ABI and receiving updated information on specific legislative proposals? If so, sign up for a public policy committee. The committees meet annually but receive emails and occasionally have conference calls during the legislative session to help the ABI public policy team with technical information about legislative proposals.

5. Participate in legislative policy calls

The ABI public policy team hosts monthly calls during the legislative session to update members on happenings at the Statehouse. To receive the most up-to-date information on legislative issues pending at the Capitol, make sure you check the ABI website and sign up for the interactive legislative calls.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS



JANUARY 13

Legislative Briefing and Reception

Embassy Suites | Des Moines
3:30 PM – 6:30 PM

JANUARY 13-15

Leadership Iowa Session IV: Government

Des Moines

FEBRUARY 9-12

Business Horizons Gilbert

Gilbert High School

FEBRUARY 19-20

Leadership Iowa University

Cedar Falls

MARCH 1

2016 Critical Business Updates

Stoney Creek Hotel & Conference Center | 300 Third St. | Sioux City
8:30 AM – 3:00 PM

MARCH 3

Connecting Statewide Leaders

Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Co. | Grinnell
10:30 AM – 1:00 PM

MARCH 3-4

Leadership Iowa Session V: Business & Industry

Grinnell

MARCH 8

2016 Critical Business Updates

Dubuque
8:30 AM – 3:00 PM

MARCH 15

Iowa Business Day on the Hill

ABI Office | 400 E. Court Ave., Suite 100 | Des Moines
9:00 AM – 11:45 AM



Visit www.iowaabi.org and click the "Events" tab for details on upcoming events.





JOIN US



CONFERENCE REGISTRATION OPENS NEXT WEEK

A new year has just begun, but it's not too early to begin planning for the 2016 Taking Care of Business Conference. This year, the ABI conference will take place on the western border of the state, in Sioux City, June 14-16.

Sioux City is rolling out the red carpet, and with live entertainment and the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino, a one-of-a-kind venue, this is a unique conference experience you cannot afford to miss.

Registration for Taking Care of Business Conference opens on Thursday, Jan. 14. Sign up now to take advantage of our Early Bird registration rates. Hotel rooms will also fill up quickly. If you haven't yet reserved your room, visit www.abitakingcareofbusiness.com for hotel information.



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NEED TO KNOW

FIND YOUR CAUCUS LOCATION

Are you planning to participate in the Iowa caucuses on Feb. 1? It is important to note that your caucus location may be different from your polling place for elections.

The caucuses are run by the state's political parties, not the Iowa secretary of state office or the county auditor offices.

You must be registered with a party to participate in the Iowa caucuses, and you can do so before the event or the night of your caucus.

Find your caucus location by visiting

CAUCUS.IAVOTES.COM

and clicking on "Find Your Caucus Location" in the Iowa Caucus Toolkit.

BY THE NUMBERS

31 PERCENT.

That's the percentage of survey respondents who ranked their employer as the most credible source of information on political and public policy issues, according to a report commissioned by the *Business and Industry Political Action Committee (BIPAC)*.

According to the survey, employers are the most trusted source for information; followed by political parties (which **28 percent** of employees considered the most credible source), labor unions (**16 percent**) and news media or their own research (both received **3 percent**).

What's more, of those employees who heard from their employers about public policy issues, 63 percent were motivated to learn more about an issue and 43 percent were motivated to register to vote.



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ABI Legislative Briefing and Reception

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Embassy Suites
Downtown Des Moines

Don't miss this opportunity to meet state lawmakers and learn about ABI's public policy priorities.

Register today at www.iowaabi.org





TOP TIPS

Dealing With the Top Employee Issues of 2016

**Todd McDonald**

President, ATW Training Solutions

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Leadership is never easy, and as we enter 2016, we need to remember that each new year brings its own new set of special challenges. 2016 won't be any different. In no priority order, I offer five employee issues that you should have on your radar for 2016.

1. Hire them if you can find them!

With unemployment in Iowa at an all-time low, it is a seller's market when it comes to hiring great people. If you need to hire people for your team, be prepared to look in unconventional places and be ready to make a decision quickly, because great people won't be on the market for long.

2. Put the "success" back into your succession planning.

It's time to get serious about succession planning. With record numbers of employees retiring daily, it's no longer acceptable to talk about creating a succession plan; it's time to make it happen. If this isn't a key goal for someone in your organization, make it one.

3. Caution--Digital Natives Ahead!

While retiring baby boomers are causing one challenge (succession planning), the new generation of digital natives (those who are Internet natives) present even different challenges. How do we recruit, develop and engage them in our workplace? Old rules won't apply to this new generation of employees. Take a moment to learn about them, because they are your future.

4. "Skill up" your employees with on-the-job opportunities.

You've heard the saying, hire for attitude and train for skills. Keep in mind that getting someone hired is just the first step to helping them succeed. Skilling up employees will be a critical success factor for them and your organization. You might consider partnering a seasoned, skilled worker who can teach the skills of that particular craft to new workers. When these programs are in place, there is a better opportunity to develop high-quality, skilled team members. Plus, it's a great opportunity for employees to "earn as they learn." Providing opportunities to learn on the job is a real incentive to recruit and retain new talent.

5. Establish a culture where time AND accountability are valued.

Time is a limited resource. We need to make sure that all employees are focused on the most important thing they should be doing. We as leaders must hold others (and ourselves) accountable for results. It's never been more important than now to make the most of our time. Remember, you can't manage time, but you can manage how you use that time. And if someone isn't, hold them accountable. Take control of your time; don't let it control you.

These are just five items that you might want to be considering. You probably have even more. Identify them, plan for them, take action and succeed!

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ABI is Iowa's oldest and largest business network, representing almost **1,500 businesses** of all types and sizes employing **over 310,000 Iowans** in all **99 counties**. If you are not sure if your organization is a member of ABI, contact Dorothy Knowles at 515-235-0568 or dknowles@iowaabi.org.